

Northeast Asia Regional Security and the United States Military: Context, Presence, and Roles

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FOREWORD

We are pleased to publish this forty-seventh volume in the *Occasional Paper* series of the United States Air Force Institute for National Security Studies (INSS). Among its many contributions to United States security, two noted repositories of strategic expertise within the United States Army are its foreign area officer cadre and the Department of Social Sciences faculty at the United States Military Academy. This collection of papers on Northeast Asian regional security taps the combined strength of both; its authors are four Army officers with demonstrated regional expertise, all currently or formerly assigned to West Point's Department of Social Sciences. The combined set of papers covers a broad and relevant swath of territory, both geographic and conceptual. The first paper, by Jay Parker, addresses the regional security context with special emphasis on that strategic landscape as viewed from the perspective of Japanese security and the United States roles both in Japanese security and within the broader region. Sue Bryant then fits the Korean peninsula into that regional security context, adding special emphasis on the Korean road toward unification and on the continuing United States military presence in Korea—both for peninsular and regional security reasons. Finally, Russ Howard and Al Wilner add China to the mix and also add the third level of analysis—their focus is on post September 11, 2001 issues and opportunities, and the specific military-to-military dimension of United States overall military presence and policy. Together, then, the papers cover the region as well as policy recommendations from macro United States security and military policy, to force presence, to the significant roles of individual service members.

One caveat: these papers are going to press just as the press is reporting that the North Koreans have acknowledged the continuation of their nuclear weapons program in violation of assurances that the program was being abandoned. While this may certainly slow the pace of Korean normalization and heighten security concerns in the region—perhaps stretching out or amending a few of the recommendations here—it certainly underscores the centrality of security concerns within this vital region. And it adds an exclamation point to the authors' calls for a continuing and focused United States military presence and security policy in Northeast Asia.

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JAMES M. SMITH
Director

**JAPAN'S CHANGING ROLE AND THE FUTURE OF US
FORWARD PRESENCE IN NORTHEAST ASIA: CONTEXT,
OPTIONS, AND OPPORTUNITIES, *Jay M. Parker***

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Does the commitment of Japan's Self Defense Force to the war on terrorism represent a bold and irreversible step toward greater military self reliance, or is this another in a long series of incremental, ambiguous, and reversible actions aimed at balancing domestic demands and external pressures? If this does represent a lasting change in Japan's defense posture, what does that mean for America's forward military presence in East Asia?

The near-term prospects for America's continuing role in the security and stability of Northeast Asia can only be effectively analyzed in light of Japan's likely security posture and the context of related regional issues and events. Even before September 11th, almost daily events in and between virtually every nation in the region highlighted the continuing United States presence. In the past decade the domestic politics of Japanese national security, the dramatic if erratic momentum toward Korean rapprochement, the re-emergence of China as a regional hegemon, and America's continuing reassessment of its global role have all combined to heighten attention to the future of American policy in East Asia.

This study reviews several specific security scenarios for Northeast Asia, examines the possible roles for all nations in the region, and concludes that in the near term Japan's domestic political and economic weaknesses combine with regional political dynamics to provide a significant, continuing US diplomatic and military presence.

**BEYOND THESUNSHINE POLICY: AN ARGUMENT IN
FAVOR OF CONTINUED US MILITARY PRESENCE IN
NORTHEAST ASIA, *Susan F. Bryant***

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The accepted logic behind the U.S. military presence in Northeast Asia is simple. American forces remain in the region to protect South Korea from another invasion from the North. This paper argues the reality is far more complex. The American military in Northeast serves as a stabilizing force among the powers in the region. So long as the United States remains committed in

Asia, both Japan and South Korea need not fear the possibility of resurgent Chinese hegemonic aspirations in the region. Similarly, the Chinese need not fear the possibility of nuclear proliferation from either Japan or South Korea, while the United States maintains its existing security guarantees.

This paper argues that the possibility of Korean rapprochement hinted at in the June 2000 summit, should spur US policy makers to consider the role of US forces in the region during a reconciliation between the two Koreas and beyond. The researcher concludes that even given a scenario of peaceful Korean reunification the logic for a continued American military presence on the peninsula remains intact.

This paper calls for a reevaluation of the missions the US military might undertake during Korean reconciliation and beyond. During reunification, the US military could provide external security, allowing Korea the opportunity to reunite free from the possibility of unwanted outside intervention. Possibilities for post-reunification missions for the United States include off-peninsular contingencies such as peacekeeping and peace enforcement.

CHINA'S RISE AND THE US ARMY: LEANING FORWARD, *Russell D. Howard and Albert S. Wilner*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The United States led war on terrorism has already had a major impact on developing state relationships in Asia. China's changing role in the regional security environment provides the US Army with unique opportunities and challenges. Greater exposure to the Peoples Liberation Army (PLA) in order to build trust and transparency must be carefully balanced by reinforcing commitments to US allies and friends and by remaining prepared to quickly respond should the relationship falter.

This paper argues that the US Army should take a dual-track approach. First, efforts should be made to improve relations by expanding Army exchanges with its Chinese counterparts. A strong program, tied to set objectives and a reciprocal framework, would improve understanding between the two militaries. Specifically, efforts should be made to broaden Army humanitarian/disaster relief contacts, increase participation in joint multi-lateral non-war-fighting and logistics related activities at locations such as the Asia

Pacific Center for Security Studies, and to expand Army efforts in counter terrorism.

It is understood that the relationship could turn negative, forcing the US Army into a more problematic scenario. This paper contends that America's ground forces, together with the joint community, must increasingly be trained and educated to meet the emergence of a Chinese military challenge in the region. Recommendations include changes to the United States Military Academy, Command and General Staff College and Senior Service College curriculums, as well as the development of a PLA OPFOR element at the Combat Training Centers.

